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The Gift of Giving

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The Gift of Giving

BY JIN PARK

Last year I went to Honduras on my first mission trip. Although going on a mission trip was something I always wanted to experience, I made excuses for past mission trips and kept putting it off. Whether it was because I was scared or too busy with school, there was always something in the way. But there was something about the mission trip to Honduras that made me want to go. The more I prayed and asked for the Lord's guidance, the more I realized God was calling me to go.

As the trip drew closer, I began to have a lot of mixed emotions. Part of me was anxious and excited, but I was also feeling quite nervous and afraid. I had never been on a mission trip or to a third world country, so I didn't really know what to expect. Fortunately, the Lord kept reminding me that He would never leave my side, so I stayed firm in my decision to go.

The day of the trip finally arrived. I had hoped and prayed that God would not only use me for His work, but that He would also allow me to come back changed. We all met at the school, loaded our bags and headed to the airport. It was really early in the morning, but everybody was excited about what was ahead of us. Once we arrived at the orphanage, we immediately found ourselves surrounded by children who soaked in every bit of our love. At that moment, I knew the trip would be an experience I'd never forget.

As much as we enjoyed spending our free time playing with all of the kids at the orphanage, we also knew there was a lot of work to be done. Despite the extreme temperatures, we

helped build a new dormitory for the older students at the orphanage. We started off carrying cement blocks up to the second floor of the dorm, but by the end of the week many of us had learned how to mix cement and lay the blocks as well. We also planned vacation Bible school programs for the elementary and middle schools, as well as a nearby daycare. Teaching children Bible stories and singing praises with them was amazing. I just wanted to give them everything I could. Seeing how much they appreciated the few things we had to offer them, like a hug or even a simple toothbrush, made me realize how satisfying it felt to put a smile on a child's face.

The eight days that we spent in Honduras truly showed me the meaning behind the text found in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give, than to receive." I found the joy in giving the simple things in life that many times we take for granted. By sharing God's love with others, I was able to receive indescribable blessings that I will never forget.



Jin Park is a freshman at Andrews University where she is studying biology and pre-dentistry. She attends the Battle Creek Tabernacle and wrote this story while she was a senior at Battle Creek Academy.